

. Court St. Pius X #1866 Anchorage Alaska 50th Celebration

Archbishop Roger L Schwietz, Archbishop Emeritus Francis T Hurley, Court Chaplain Rev. Dan Hebert, Catholic Daughters and guests. It is an honor and privilege to share Court St. Pius X #1866's celebration of 50 years. My parish is in the Diocese of Great Falls- Billings, Montana whose current Bishop is Michael Warfel who previously served as Bishop of Juneau. He has encouraged me to travel and meet with my CDA sisters in Alaska. I also bring congratulations from our National Regent Joanne Tomassi .

I would like to reflect on our history as an organization. In the early years we were known as the Daughters of Isabella. In the 1920's our new identity as the Catholic Daughters was taken and we quickly grew to 100,000 members. The early years' ingredients for rapid growth included: aggressive leadership; support and direction from church leaders and the Knights of Columbus ; careful screening of potential members and offering social, intellectual, and religious activities that would appeal to women.

In the second decade of CDA History WWI began, more women entered the work force and were given the right to vote. Immigration from Europe meant 1 in 6 Americans was Catholic. Our membership supported food conservation, sold Liberty Bonds and took first aid classes. Working with the Knights of Columbus, recreation centers for soldiers of all faiths were established. When women left their homes seeking employment, the order promoted the placement of Catholic women in club houses in 36 locations.

In our early history under the leadership of Supreme Regent Mary Duffy, Courts began reporting activities in the areas of education, legislation, charitable works, public relations and Spiritual teaching, similar to our Circle of Love reports today. The National Office moved to its present location 10 W. 71st St. in New York City in 1926. Our first two National Chaplains served from 1925-1966. After that time it became customary for the National Regent to appoint a National Chaplain to serve during her

term. Our present National Chaplain Fr. Ed Lamp has shared his weekly scripture reflections on the CDA Web site.

Recently Anne Nelson, Regent Elect, and members of a Campus Court spoke on EWTN's Life on the Rock but in 1927 Supreme Regent Mary Duffy spoke on NBC radio about Catholic Daughters. The Daughters also gave financial support to radio stations sponsoring "The Catholic Hour."

Junior Catholic Daughters Courts were organized in 1926. By 1942 there were 386 JCDA Courts in 39 states. Based on the Motto, Be Useful, the Juniors had three goals: love God, serve others, and Live Nobly. Membership rose steadily between 1920 and 1960. At that time JCDA was integrated into the Youth Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC). This proved to be costly in dollars and eventual loss of identity of JCDA within the National Organization. National Regent Winnifred Trabeaux reorganized the Juniors and developed three areas of concentration-Message, Community, and Service."

During the Depression years, the National officers took salary cuts but charitable giving continued to flow from the CDA Treasury. At the 1939 National Convention members were asked to coordinate efforts with the Red Cross, the USO, and form units to sew, knit, and make bandages. When WWII ended overseas relief programs were begun. Courts "adopted" stricken families in Italy, West Germany, and Poland. Due to the Korean War's devastation, the 1954 National Convention noted that the Daughters had donated \$10,000 for food relief.

When our National Bishops choose Mary as patroness of the country and laid plans for a National Shrine dedicated to her, Supreme Regent Frances Maher's asked the Daughters to commit to this effort and by 1959 had fulfilled their pledge of \$250,000 toward the construction of five chapels each commemorating one of the glorious mysteries, in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC .

The 1960's when Court St. Pius was chartered saw the end of leadership by women who had participated in Catholic Daughters since the 1930's. At the 1970 National Convention National Regent Mary Kanane and Vice

Regent, Winifred Trabeaux, oversaw major changes thru the Constitution and Laws Revision Committee. Overtime the National Court in biennial meetings amended the constitution in minor and major ways. Supreme Regent Mary Duffy served from 1923-1950. Term limits were gradually imposed and the words By-laws replaced Constitution. In 2002 term limits were changed to, "No National officer shall serve more than one term in the same office and no National Director shall serve more than two consecutive terms in office." The 1970 constitution had changed the number of directors from 6 to 9. In 2006 the first Regent Elect was voted upon. A National Executive Secretary, later Director, was begun in 1975 with Lorraine McMahan serving until 1996. Now that position is filled by Margaret," Peggy" O'Brien.

National Regent Mary Kanane, 1970-74, enjoyed traveling and carried the CDA Banner to the Lourdes Centennial in France, Fatima, Rome, a Maryknolls Hospital in Hong Kong, Peru, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. Enroute to the International Eucharistic Congress in Australia she visited the Court in Guam and stopped in Manila to meet Cardinal Rufino Santos who gave permission for CDA to expand into the Philippines but political events made the institution of Courts there impossible. At the end of her term she made her first trip to Alaska and visited Juneau, Ketchikan and Anchorage. My prayer for the Catholic Daughters of Alaska is to see Courts begun in Ketchikan and Fairbanks plus one other community to allow you to qualify as a State Court and have biennial State Conventions.

Winifred Trabeaux, National Regent 1974-78 was faced with declining membership and to generate fresh enthusiasm and attract new members, updated what we know now as the Circle of Love Program. The "Heart Speaks to Heart" program had four categories: Renewal, Apostolate, Community, and the JCDA.

At the urging of the National Chaplain Archbishop Philip Hannan, who at the time was also chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., the delegates to the 1974 biennial convention in Los Angles agreed to explore the feasibility of

establishing a Chair in American Catholic Church History at the Catholic University of America . Funding for the endowed Chair was to cover the professor's salary, scholarships for graduate students, and an annual "Catholic Daughters of the America Lecture. \$750,000 was raised for this project within four years.

After the US Supreme Court's Roe versus Wade decision in January, 1973, liberalizing abortion laws, CDA became more actively engaged in the right-to-life movement.

Both Mary Kanane and Winifred Trabeaux sought ways to expand the Order outside the United States with Courts in Mexico. Courts in Puerto Rico had been established in 1924. There had been Courts in Cuba until the Castro led revolution in 1959 when the national office lost contact with them. On the 75th Anniversary of the Order, it was recognized that Catholic Daughters was no longer solely a North American Organization and changed it's name to the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

National Regent Mary Murray, 1978-82, had headed the funding for the Chair at the American Catholic University of America and wrote frequently for Share magazine. From 1982-86, Texan Loretta J Knebel served as National Regent. During her first term, the National board underwrote a film explaining the purposes and work of the Catholic Daughters. Despite the recession the Daughters donated \$30,000 to Mother Teresa of Calcutta .

Royola McLaughlin, National Regent 1986-90 headed the funding drive for the new headquarters of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, D.C. She encouraged state and local chaplains to write for Share magazine and during her term, the CDA mission statement was written. She described the mission statement as a definition of who we are, whereas the principles are what we do. She was among the dignitaries to greet Pope John Paul II in San Francisco during his 1987 visit. I had the privilege of talking with Royola at the SOAR dinner in New York this month and at 91 she is as vibrant as ever. In the 1980's Operation Morning Star was established

as a means of better organizing CDA involvement in national and state legislation. Joseph Leary, attorney was hired as legislative counsel and still serves our organization.

Our National Regent for 1990-94 Edna Nolte had served in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corp as a flight simulator instructor during WWII. During her term as National Regent she worked with Juniors, extension and rituals. She took measures to resolve financial problems of the organization reducing Share to three issues and raising the National Dues. She met with President George H Bush at Camp David where he thanked the various religious organizations among them CDA for their contributions to the Camp David Interfaith Chapel.

Grace Rinaldi, National Regent 1994-98, from California saw the possibilities for building houses with Habitat for Humanity and in 1995 encouraged the board to a blitz build in Oklahoma City. With Eunice Riles, Regent 1998-02, she formed new national teams which focused on leadership and membership. Recognition of the Order's concerns for women and families came when Grace Rinaldi was asked to participate in the World Conference on Women in Beijing, China.

The delegates at the national convention in Des Moines in 1994 requested an updating of the Heart Speaks to Heart Program, then 20 years old. The result of the board's work was the Circle of Love presented at the 1996 convention. The circle of hearts has seven spokes which highlight the main points of the program: charitable projects, quality of life; leadership, legislation, education, youth, and spiritual enhancement.

When in 2002 Grace DiCairano was elected National Regent in Houston, it was for two years as the convention voted to limit executive officers to one term and national directors to two consecutive terms. Since that time M Joan McKenna, Claudia Bosch; Libby Ramirez and now Joanne Tomassi have served as National Regents.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas has never forgotten that one purpose of the Order is the spiritual and cultural enrichment of its members. Our interests are catholic in the broad sense-service in civic,

patriotic and spiritual arenas. Our membership has been given opportunities to develop leadership skills but have never forgotten that we are foremost a religious group who look to the Church to nurture our lives, provide guidance in implementing the Gospel message and the social teaching of the Church in public life.

Our programs have shifted emphasis to meet the needs of our members, communities and the world. We enter another century still identifying ourselves as women fostering a culture of life and love. The Catholic Daughters of the Americas continues to strive to embrace the principle of faith working through love in the promotion of Justice, equality, and the advancement of human rights and human dignity for all.

Reading your court's newsletter and receiving updates from your Regent Debbie Vea have shown me that the women of Court Pius X serve your parishes and the Diocese of Anchorage in many ways: with Sacramental receptions ; taking an active role in Pro Life activities thru prayer , standing vigil before abortion clinics and marching for life. You assist those in need thru the Bishop's Attic and the pregnancy center. Scholarships are provided for 8th graders entering Catholic Schools. As your sisters before you contributed to CDA causes, your Court supports Local, State, and National Projects and Charities.

The history of an organization is the story of its members. It began as a dream but its greatness is judged by its service. The generosity of the membership has brightened the lives of many . Catholic Daughters can be justifiably proud of the service extended, the charity offered and the good deeds yet to be done..

Thank you for your 50 years of service !!!

